

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated June 16, 2006, in conjunction with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE), which is being filed herewith. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 5-6 and 10-15 are under consideration in this application. Claims 5 and 13 are being amended, as set forth in the above marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim applicants' invention. Claims 14-15 are being added.

All the amendments the claims are supported by the specification. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 5-6 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,608,417 to de Vall (hereinafter "de Vall") in view of US Patent No. 6,522,308 to Mathieu (hereinafter "Mathieu"). The above rejection has been carefully considered, but is most respectfully traversed.

Applicants contend that the cited references and their combinations all fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of the present invention as recited in at least independent claim 5. As such, the present invention as now claimed is distinguishable and thereby allowable over the rejections raised in the Office Action. The withdrawal of the outstanding prior art rejections is in order, and is thus respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

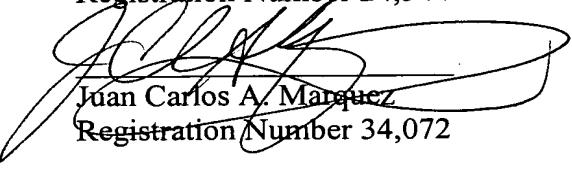
In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present

invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley P. Fisher
Registration Number 24,344


Juan Carlos A. Marquez
Registration Number 34,072

REED SMITH LLP
3110 Fairview Park Drive, Suite 1400
Falls Church, Virginia 22042
(703) 641-4200

October 16, 2006

SPF/JCM/JT